782 and can now also appear at the public state and
793 community sacrifices when any basis of relationship justifies it.

This ceremonial way of introducing lyngdohs is still the custom especially in the kingdoms of Kyrim and Nongkrem.

The number of active, official lyngdohs varies according to the region. A kingdom has at least one official lyngdoh. [Fig. 4. Egg throwing: Throwing of the egg.] [Fig. 5. Egg throwing: Investigation] But the kingdom
[796] of Nongkrem, for example, has six official lyngdohs, who together with the king and with other lyngdohs from neighboring villages annually offer the great state sacrifice. (8) Even

8. P. Dr. Becker, S.D.S., "Die Nongkrempuja in den Khasibergen" [The Nongkrem Puja in the Khasi; Mountains], Anthropos, Vol. 4, (1909), p. 898.

villages often have their own official lyngdohs.

For the services which they perform for the people by offering sacrifices, they do not receive money or a present of money. Usually their trouble is rewarded by natural products, such as a hen, a bottle of rice liquor or even, though more rarely, by a pig. Obviously they always have the right to participate in the sacrificial meal.

## 2. The Sacrifices.

### a) State Sacrifices.

161 According to the report of the last census
722 the tribe of Khasi numbers about 200,000 people.
621 (9) These are not unified under one ruler, but

9. P. Br. C. Becker, S.D.S. Im

161

Stromtal des Brahmaputra /In the Valley of the Brahmaputra/, (Aachen: Xaverius Publishing House, 1923) p. 293.

782 are divided into 10 kingdoms and 15 small states
621 (communities). In each of these kingdoms and communities an official state sacrifice is of-
783 fered each year. The smaller state units offer
776 it to the u basa shnong or to the u phan u
796 kyrpad (the tutelary god of a village), the larger one to the u 'lei Shillong (the god who has commanded the sacrifice) /218/. The purpose of this large sacrifice is to thank the revered god for the country (kingdom or community) and to beg him to make its inhabitants
782 healthy and happy. This is shown by the prayers
796 spoken at these sacrifices, namely: "O god Shillong! for thee is this prayer, this sacrifice of goat, of hen, of kpu and rynsi (a kind of bread of rice meal or cornmeal with pounded sugar), of utensils of preparation, as thou hast given them to the royal lineage, so that once in every year Puja is celebrated in thy name, so that we may live happily, be healthy and increase, so that kings will arise, so that their honor and that of the kingdom will grow and increase and the children of the kingdom will spread out to increase thy name and thy honor." (10)

10. P. Dr. C. Becker, S.D.S., "Die Nongkrempuja in den Khasibergen" /The Nongkrem Puja in the Khasi Mountains/, Anthropos Vol. 4, 1909, p. 901.

In another prayer they say: "O lord, thou who hast created heaven and earth, thou hast placed a king that we may be children of his

613 us take such a clan mother with the name Ka Sing Lau. She has two
596 sons and five daughters, and in addition two brothers and two sisters who are all married. Also each of the five daughters and two sisters has four children. These forty-six people live with the clan mother and form the family clan of the Lau. To these we also add the sons [592] and brothers, the nephews and grandsons, but not their children. The latter have nothing to do with the family Lau but belong to the family clan of their wives, live with that clan and are counted in it. Likewise neither the husband of Ka Sing Lau, nor the husbands of the various daughters, sisters, nieces, and granddaughters belong here. They are all counted with their own clans, live and work with them according to Khasi custom, and only visit their wives occasionally perhaps after dark.

● 621 The entire clan-family of Lau is housed in 5 or 6 huts, which all
351 stand next to each other in a semicircle or are built one above the other on the slope of a hill, according to the character of the land. A [241] garden frequently surrounds them in which maize, sweet potatoes, potato-like roots of Soh-ot and Schrut, bananas and, on the southern slopes of the Khasi Mountains, also coffee, pineapples, and other fruits are cultivated. A circle of bamboo cane that is so important for building purposes, household objects, and /130/ implements surrounds the garden and huts. This bamboo cane grows up as thick as an arm to a height of 10 or 15 meters and at the same time forms a good protection against bad weather. A wall (morscha) of thrown-up earth encloses everything, forming an enclosed farm, prevents unimpeded access, and protects cattle and crops from the attacks and devastations of wild animals.

423 What is considered the family property of such a clan? Primarily it is the land, the gardens, the rice fields, woods, fallow mountain and grazing lands. On the southern slopes of the Khasi Mountains there [241] are fields for the cultivation of rape, orange groves, laurel groves, plantations of betel palms and of pepper leaves which far and wide are so highly treasured for betel chewing as a source of pleasure. (2)

2. Cf. Becker, Im Stromtal des Brahmaputra, /In the River Valley of the Brahmaputra/ (Munich, 1923). pp. 357 ff.

[311] Usually there is so much land available that the family-clan can nourish itself properly and also increase in number

423 According to its size and wealth a family clan also owns a
231 corresponding number of cows, oxen, hens, pigs, and goats. Neither the milk nor the flesh of the cows is used. They are kept for the

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

CHAPTER II

# VILLAGE COMMUNITY

As models of a Khasi village community, I have taken my data for the discussion presented in this chapter from two villages situated in the Kadashinong area, Sohkynduh and Kongton, with comparative data from Shella and Jatinga villages.

Sohkynduh and Kongton are situated in one of the most secluded spots of the Khasi Hills and the economy is shifting cultivation, with millet as its main product. Only a few Christians are found; most of the population are pagans. Shella is situated on the southern border of the Khasi Hills, adjacent to Pakistan. Jatinga is in the North Cachar Hills, surrounded by patrilineal tribes, such as the Zemi-Naga, the Kuki and the Cacharee. The economy of both villages is pan-leaf and orange cultivation. In Shella, Hindu, Christian and pagan are found among the villagers almost in the same proportions, while the Jatinga villagers are all Christian. The two Kadashinong villages, Shella and Jatinga, differ from one another not only in their religious and economic aspects, but in overt culture, dialect and political organization as well. (Additional information concerning Shella and Jatinga is given in Appendix.) Shella and Jatinga are unique among Khasi villages and quite sophisticated, having been developed under a trading economy, with considerable contacts with other peoples, including Hindus. I selected these villages in order to ascertain how far the structural principle which operates in the Kadashinong villages can be found to act also in totally different economic and environmental situations.

121 621 771 [101] [245] 184 621 121

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



necessary. The chances of acquiring a piece of land nowadays are small, except for very successful men, and usually the size of the plot is only just enough to maintain one household. When this land is passed on to the next generation, the youngest daughter will hold the title to it. This fact tends to exclude married elder sisters from the right to use the land, since it is not sufficient for more than one household. Thus the ultimogeniture succession rule seems to have developed more sharply and to have encouraged limited inheritance in conjunction with the shortage of land.

This tendency creates unbalance in the economy of the households within a community. It is a usual picture in Khasi villages, for the bigger and well-built houses to be occupied by the youngest daughter's family, while the elder sisters reside in poor huts. Youngest daughters are usually landowners, while their elder sisters have often to become day-labourers after their marriage, unless their husbands are capable men, or their fathers wealthy enough to give them some share of their acquired property. On the whole, the variations at present between rich and poor are considerable in a Khasi community, in comparison with that of the Garo, where the economic condition of each household in a village is more or less similar. These differences are not only a matter of economic organization but arise from the nature of each social structure.

The economic and social patterns of Sohkynduh and Kongton are very similar, but their dialects are slightly different: my interpreter, who came from Cherrapunje, could work quite well at Sohkynduh, but at Kongton he found some difficulty, especially with the speech of the old men, and with their religious expressions. The head man of Kongton, who was quite accustomed to the Cherra dialect, acted as an interpreter for us. Such differences in dialect in the Khasi Hills are common phenomena; it is said that every valley has its own dialect. Differences are found not only in speaking, but also, to a certain extent, in culture and in social usages.

## II. Village Endogamy

One of the outstanding features of Khasi social organization is the predominant tendency of endogamy on the level of the village, which contrasts with the structural orientation of the Garo village exogamy. This is closely connected with the distributions of clans and the nature of the descent groups.

The Khasi population consists of a number of *kur*, matrilineal clans, whose members consider themselves to be descended from a common ancestress. The members of the same *kur* have a common

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



614 [765] [769] *mauba* (grave stone), in which the bones of all the dead members are buried. When the *mauba* becomes full, or some members move away to a considerable distance, they provide another branch *mauba*, creating a new *kur*.[1] Thus in course of time, every older *kur* occasionally branches off. Every branch *kur* has a different name, but can be grouped into a major *kur* thus forming a distinct exogamous group. Relationships among the minor *kur* of one major *kur* are usually known, or can be ascertained, so that marriages among these members are avoided. When the Khasi express this kind of group consciousness, they use the term *jai* (own people). For outsiders, it is difficult to know through the names of minor *kur* whether *kur* A and *kur* B are of the same group or not.

However, neither clan solidarity nor corporative activities are found among the Khasi, except in those clans which are considered of higher status, and maintain a functional position in the political or religious fields. Such are the Siem of the ruling clan and the Ringdoh of the priest clan, etc. Among commoners like the villagers of Sohkynduh and Kongton, the importance of a *kur* is confined to recognizing a common ancestress, with a common *mauba* conception, which requires them to maintain a strict exogamous rule. But whether of major or minor *kur*, its members do not meet together or have a common leader. Actually major *kur* of which there are a considerable number all over the Khasi Hills, have no clear-cut geographical distribution. Each is scattered over a wide area, cutting across territory which includes several villages, and mixing with various other *kur*. Indeed, some of them are very widely distributed geographically and found in almost all regions of the Khasi Hills. A minor *kur* is also scattered over many different villages, though it shows more concentration than the major one. Consequently a village may be composed of small segments [621] of more than a dozen different *kur*. Even these small segments of each *kur* found in a single village have little or no sense of kin-group solidarity, unless the members have quite close kinship ties. In many cases, though some members have the same *kur* name, their relationship may be distant, so that they cannot always reconstruct their genealogical relationship. In such a case their behaviour and attitude towards the same *kur* members and towards other *kur* members show no difference.

613 Individuals are not grouped actually under the name of *kur* but in a smaller group of matrilineal descendants from one great-grand-

[764] 1. The Khasi cremate dead bodies: bones and ashes are usually kept in a spot near the youngest sister's house which is the centre of a functional descent group, for many years and finally placed in the *mauba* of the *kur*. They say that these bones are to be collected and replaced into the *mauba* every hundred years with a great ceremony. However, none of villagers are certain about the year when the last ceremony was held.

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mother, for which unit the Khasi word *kpoh* is used. Such a group of matrilineal kin is usually confined to one domestic family or to a group of households, linked by direct extension of a main household. However, even this descent unit is not a single productive and consumer unit, though it may act as a religious unit, having common ancestral property. I shall take up this thread again at a later stage of my analysis.

Because of the lack of the functional lineage organization as a corporate unit, the village community becomes the significant unit as a higher level of organization than that of *kpoh*. This fact is supported by the high tendency to community endogamy which links every household of a village into a unit with considerable cohesion and solidarity. In fact the members of a village community are linked to each other in various ways by affinal or cognatic ties.

List 6. *House-owners and their Spouses of Sohkynduh.*

| *House-owner* | *Kur* | *Spouse* | *Kur* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Ruka | Pohnong | Suro | Prarian |
| 2. Shngiam | Pohnong | Nier | Riatam |
| 3. U Rabi | Prarian | | |
| 4. Te | Prarian | Phaongrung | Dkhar |
| 5. Pho | Khongriah | Ser | Dkhar |
| 6. Dewli | Dkhar | Wen | Ksing |
| 7. Snoh | Khongshei | Hajur | Khongsit |
| 8. Kosimai | Dkhar | Koshon | Kongjah |
| 9. Onti | Dkhar | Hajur | Khongsit |
| 10. Jeid | Khonglam | | |
| 11. Jun | Khonsidir | Using | Ksing |
| 12. Mo | Khongsidir | Kisbad | Khongshei |
| 13. U sil | Khongsidir | | |
| 14. Rupai | Khongshei | Soli | Shrieh |
| 15. Tngan | Khongmowpat | Tik | Prarian |
| 16. Step | Khongmowpat | Nowel | Ksing |
| 17. Phi | Khongsidir | Phoin | Mawpat |
| 18. Khaila | Prarian | Sising | Masar |
| 19. Jep | Ksing | Syndro | Dkhar |
| 20. Khot | Shrieh | Lait | Khongshei |
| 21. Pre | Prarian | Mon | Khongshei |
| 22. Kam | Khonshei | Pion | Khongriah |
| 23. Leni | Prarian | Jam | Khongjiliew |
| 24. Shakmel | Khongngain | Jrop | Dkhar |
| 25. Jia | Khongjiliew | | |
| 26. Jemnud | Khonglam | Josio | Riahtam |
| 27. Kilo | Dkhar | Muta | Khonglam |
| 28. Phimai | Riahtam | Rang | Dkhar |
| 29. Jak | Riahtam | Babusing | Tyngsong |
| 30. U Jin | Khonglam | | |
| 31. Kheri | Shrieh | Bising | Khonglam |
| 32. Sor | Kynshah | Josio (26) | Riahtam |

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| | *House-owner* | *Kur* | *Spouse* | *Kur* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | — | — | — | — |
| 33. | Ke | Khongsit | Beno | Khongriah |
| 34. | Hil | Khongjliew | Mudui | Majaw |
| 35. | Erisa | Riahtam | Jen | Khongji |
| 36. | Eli | Khongsit | Khang | Khongshei |
| 37. | Ede | Khongsit | Berod | Riahtam |
| 38. | Keril | Shrieh | Kowai | Khongsit |
| 39. | He | Khongsit | Dek | Mawpat |
| 40. | Phro | Dkhar | Dakhil | Prarian |
| 41. | Shugal | Khonglam | Jran | Prarian |
| 42. | Ieitmon | Tham | Kop | Khongsidir |
| 43. | Prsiang | Khongsit | Miton | Khongngain |
| 44. | Pjah | Shirieh | | |
| 45. | Lhi | Prarian | | |
| 46. | Libon | Kynshah | Synbo | Dkhar |
| 47. | Kweit | Tham | Horirai | Kynshah |
| 48. | Syndon | Shirieh | Jum | Khongriah |

*Note:* 1) 3, 13, and 30 are households the heads of which are men who have no wife or sister (mother, niece) living with them.
2) Husbands of 10, 44 and 45 died, and 25 divorced.
3) Husbands of 26 and 32 are the same man (polygynyst).

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List 7. *Numbers by* kur *of Individuals named in List 6.*

| | *House-owner* | | *Spouses* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Women* | *Men* | | |
| | — | — | — | — |
| 1. Prarian | 5 | 1 | 5 | 11 |
| 2. Riahtam | 3 | | 3 | 6 |
| 3. Dkhar | 5 | | 6 | 11 |
| 4. Shrieh | 5 | | 1 | 6 |
| 5. Pohnong | 2 | | 0 | 2 |
| 6. Ksing | 1 | | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Khongsit | 5 | | 3 | 8 |
| 8. Khongsidir | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| 9. Khongshei | 3 | | 3 | 6 |
| 10. Khongmowpat | 2 | | 2 | 4 |
| 11. Khonglam | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| 12. Khongjiliew | 2 | | 1 | 3 |
| 13. Khongngain | 1 | | 1 | 2 |
| 14. Khongriah | 1 | | 3 | 4 |
| 15. Tham | 2 | | 0 | 2 |
| 16. Kynshah | 2 | | 1 | 3 |
| 17. Khongjah | | | 1 | 1 |
| 18. Masar | | | 1 | 1 |
| 19. Tygsong | | | 1 | 1 |
| 20. Majaw | | | 1 | 1 |
| 21. Khongji | | | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 45 | 3 | 40 | 88 |

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List 8. *Actual descent Links found among House-owners of Sohkynduh.*

| *House-owners** | *Kur* |
|---|---|
| 1. 18-21-23 | Prarian |
| 2. 4-45 | Prarian |
| 3. 28-29-35 | Riahtam |
| 4. 27-40 | Dkhar |
| 5. 20-48-44-38 | Shrieh |
| 6. 33-39-43 | Khongsit |
| 7. 36-37 | Khongsit |
| 8. 11-12 | Khongsidir |
| 9. 7-22 | Khongshei |
| 10. 16-15 | Khongmowpat |
| 11. 25-34 | Khongjiliew |
| 12. 32-46 | Kynshah |

*Note:* Figures correspond to that of List 6.

List 9. *House-owners and their Spouses of Kongion.*

| *House-owner* | *Kur* | *Spouse* | *Kur* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Shra | Pohnong | Ijiro | Khongsit |
| 2. Klur | — | •(Mahalik) | Shabong |
| 3. Pheni | — | •(Skit) | Majaw |
| 4. Rai | — | D(Skit) (3) | — |
| 5. Syen | — | Shynna | Khongsit |
| 6. Khubor | — | •(Irai) | — |
| 7. Shngiam | — | D(Γsrun) | Sohkhlet |
| 8. Lphuin | — | Jubonrai (52, 20) | Majaw |
| 9. Den | — | Khain | Riahtam |
| 10. Kyrin | — | •(Ridon) | Sohkhlet |
| 11. U Kynroi | — | D(Jat) | Khongsit |
| 12. Sad | — | Khim | Khongwir |
| 13. Tanghui | Khongsit | •(Kheng) | Mynrieng |
| 14. Rihiam | — | •(Mongbah) | Majaw |
| 15. Liti | — | Borsing | Shabong |
| 16. Web | — | Mrit | Buhphang |
| 17. Latem | — | •(Ring) | Shabong |
| 18. Langdiang | — | Burma | Riahtam |
| 19. Ribamon | — | Swar | Pohnong |
| 20. Mo | — | Jubonrai (8, 52) | Majaw |
| 21. Kliet | — | Nobar | — |
| 22. Thakeit | — | D•(Bit) | — |
| 23. U Sabur | — | •(Jling) | Shabong |
| 24. Iut | — | •(Khyllah) | Khongji |
| 25. Dngar | — | •(Lariang) | Khongngain |
| 26. Duro | Majaw | Iong | Khongshei |
| 27. Buh | — | That | Sohkhlet |
| 28. Hima | — | Sbedar | Rangrah |

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| *House-owner* | *Kur* | *Spouse* | *Kur* |
|---|---|---|---|
| — | — | — | — |
| 29. U Shai | — | Phri | Khongngain |
| 30. Tamsa | — | *(Ramjai) | Pohnong |
| 31. Kiun | — | Joit | Khongwir |
| 32. Krip | — | Mok | Buhphang |
| 33. Main | — | Soh | Dkhar |
| 34. Pein | Rangrah | Kber | Shabong |
| 35. Ieh | — | Kdu | — |
| 36. Kynian | — | Hara | Shabong |
| 37. Tied | — | | |
| 38. U Thuia | — | Phiri | Lyngdoh |
| 39. Pata | Riahtam | D*(Biria) | Tding |
| 40. Kit | — | Shkor | Pohnong |
| 41. Rimai | — | D*(Piew) | — |
| 42. Rita | — | *(Bhashon) | Kynshah |
| 43. Ribih | — | Shamaliak | Lyngdoh |
| 44. Git | — | Kynhei | Tding |
| 45. Jemjani | Sohkhlet | Skin | Khongji |
| 46. Wum | — | *(Mishon) | Shabong |
| 47. Kror | — | Sho | Khongsit |
| 48. Hori | Shabong | *(Brim) | Rangrah |
| 49. Pho | — | Mlian | Khongji |
| 50. Sho | — | Slam | Khongngain |
| 51. Luguin | — | D*(Niew) | Lyngdoh |
| 52. Rupa | — | Jubongrai (8, 20) | Majaw |
| 53. Ksher | — | *(Rangsi) | Khongsit |
| 54. Kolina | — | Poi | Majaw |
| 55. Lak | Khongji | D*(Khyllah) | Khongshei |
| 56. U Phin | — | *(Syaid) | Mynrieng |
| 57. Thasi | — | Ten | Shabong |
| 58. Dheaw | — | Dormu | Rangrah |
| 59. Syaid | Mynrieng | D(Phin, 56) | Khongji |
| 60. Syur | — | Kdek | Khongrymmai |
| 61. Sur | — | *(Base) | Shabong |
| 62. Bhik | — | D(Lar) | Majaw |

*Note:* 1) * = dead. D = divorced.
2) House-owners of 11, 23, 29, 38 and 56 are men, and the rest are women.
3) Husband of 8, 20 and 52 are the same man (polygynist).

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List 10. *Numbers by* kur *of Individuals named in List 9.*

| *Kur* | *No. of house-owners* | | *No. of spouses* | | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Women* | *Men* | *Men* | *Women* | |
| — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 1. Pohnong ..... | 11 | 1 | 4 | | 16 |
| 2. Khongsit ..... | 12 | 1 | 6 | | 19 |
| 3. Majaw ..... | 7 | 1 | 7 | | 15 |
| 4. Rangrah ..... | 4 | 1 | 3 | | 8 |
| 5. Riahtam ..... | 6 | | 2 | | 8 |

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| *Kur* | *No. of house-owners* | | *No. of spouses* | | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Women* | *Men* | *Men* | *Women* | |
| — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 6. Sohkhlet | 3 | | 3 | | 6 |
| 7. Shabong | 7 | | 10 | | 17 |
| 8. Khongji | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| 9. Mynrieng | 4 | | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| 10. Khongwir | | | 2 | | 2 |
| 11. Buhphong | | | 2 | | 2 |
| 12. Khongngain | | | 3 | | 3 |
| 13. Khongshei | | | 2 | | 2 |
| 14. Dkhar | | | 1 | | 1 |
| 15. Lyngdoh | | | 2 | | 3 |
| 16. Tding | | | 2 | | 2 |
| 17. Kynshah | | | 1 | | 1 |
| 18. Khongrymmai | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Total | 57 | 5 | 54 | 3 | 119 |

List 11. *Actual Descent Links found among House-owners of Kontong.*

| *House-owners* | *Kur* |
|---|---|
| 1. 1-7 | Pohnong |
| 2. 2-3-12 | Pohnong |
| 3. 13-18 | Khongsit |
| 4. 14-15 | Khongsit |
| 5. 17-25 | Khongsit |
| 6. 19-20 | Khongsit |
| 7. 23-24 | Khongsit |
| 8. 26-29-33 | Majaw |
| 9. 27-28 | Majaw |
| 10. 31-32 | Majaw |
| 11. 36-38 | Rangrah |
| 12. 40-44 | Riahtam |
| 13. 42-43 | Riahtam |
| 14. 45-46-47 | Sohkhlet |
| 15. 48-49-54 | Shabong |
| 16. 59-60-61 | Mynrieng |

*Note:* Numbers correspond to that of List 9.

The data I collected in Sohkynduh and Kongton show that the number of households that can be included in a single descent group (actual kinship ties through female members) is strikingly small, as shown in List 8 (Sohkynduh) and List 11 (Kongton). The maximum number of households belonging to a recognizable descent group was four, and mostly two. Many households (19 households of Sohkynduh; 25 households of Kongton) which did not appear in List 8 and List 11,

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613 formed independent descent groups by individual households, for
614 which no traceable genealogical relation with any other descent groups
621 could be established, though some of them belonged to the same *kur*. In Sohkynduh, the total 48 households were divided into 16 *kur* (according to the house-owner), and in Kongton, the total 62 households were divided into 9 *kur*, while the number of actual descent groups amount to 31 in Sohkynduh and 41 in Kongton.

166 This fact, I presumed, indicated a considerable mobility of the
178 population of each village community. Hence, I tried my best to
613 reconstruct the historical alignments of these descent groups, both
614 from my genealogical data and with the help of the villagers' memory.
621 The result showed that the mobility of the population over the last fifty years had been surprisingly great and complex. In Sohkynduh, the Praian clan seems to be the oldest inhabitants of this village with 16 *kur* segments. Next came a family of the Ksing. The third wave was a family of Khonglam, and the fourth, Siem Lyngngoh which I mentioned previously (p. 104). The next were families of the Kynshah, many members of which had left for Nonprian village after a few years. The sixth wave was the Srieh family. All the above movements took place before the great earthquake of 1897 which shook Assam. After 1897 the movements became more intense and complicated, and involved many families of various *kur*. The villagers could not remember the order in which they came: there has been continual coming and going even up to now. At present, the Prarian, the Ksing, the Khonglam, the Kynshah and the Dkhar are the older among the 16 *kur*. However, such migrations concern usually a single family only, not a group of *kur*, and that is the typical pattern of Khasi migration. Hence, families which have the same *kur* name do not always indicate the same movements. The incentive for such migration seems to be to get land better appropriated to one's economic condition. Particularly, as I have already mentioned elsewhere (p. 105), the shortage of land seems to encourage families of elder sisters who have no share of property, to move to other areas and look for land.

Thus, many households which make up the present village are minor segments of different *kur*, or of the same *kur*, but they can hardly trace their genealogical relations to one another. A migration to a new village was not undertaken at random; it was mostly as a result of information received from neighbouring villages, or from those where friends or relatives had already settled in. Several neighbouring villages usually dispose of more than one common market where they can exchange information and developed friendships over trading. The matrilineal kinship relation is no more important a factor than any of the others mentioned above. Among the Khasi,

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15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



the matrilineal descent group has a distinguished function only when there is common residence and common property.

In Kongton, among 9 different *kur* (List 10), Pohnong and Khonsit accounted for the majority of the population, while the rest, seven *kur*, were more or less of equal size. On the whole the population seemed more stable than that of Sohkynduh. However, as in Sohkynduh, actual descent groups amounted to 41, many of which have the same *kur* name but could not always establish genealogical relationship with one another; nor was there any functional cohesion. I failed to reconstruct the history of the formation of these descent groups: the villagers had no memory of their past except very fragmentary information which was quite insufficient to account for their present composition. They only insisted this was a very old village in comparison with Sohkynduh and other neighbouring villages.

While I was struggling with the villagers' scant accounts of their past and fragmented kinship relations among the present households, I was struck by the poorness of the villagers' genealogical memory in comparison with that of the Garo. Suppose A, B and C, who belonged to the same property-holding descent group three generations back: A and B being sisters and C being B's daughter. If B, including her descendants, moved away from the village two generations back, the present generation of A's and C's descendants would easily lose contact and knowledge of their genealogical relationship. This fact, on the other hand, illustrates some important aspects of the Khasi social structure: the kinship relation—matrilineal descent link—is not a significant factor beyond the scale of the household (property-holding descent group), and locality is more important than matrilineal descent for the formation of the Khasi community. Through the predominant practice of endogamy on the level of the village, the small segments (found on a level of a household or a group of a few households) of various different *kur* clustered in a village are linked by affinal relations each other, by which altogether form a well knit social organization of a village community. The cohesion and solidarity of the Khasi village community is strengthened by the local endogamy not by the localized lineage organization.

In fact, in contrast with the rather loose kinship relations which link different households, the affinal relations link almost every households in the village, as shown in Fig. 10. The lines, ———, indicate marriage relations between living members of households, and the lines, - - - - -, indicate affinal relations established through dead members of present households or through spouses' kinship relations at Sohkynduh, as in November 1955. In this way, except for one household (24), members of a single household are all linked together through affinal or cognatic ties. In some cases, the affinal relations between

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



602
621

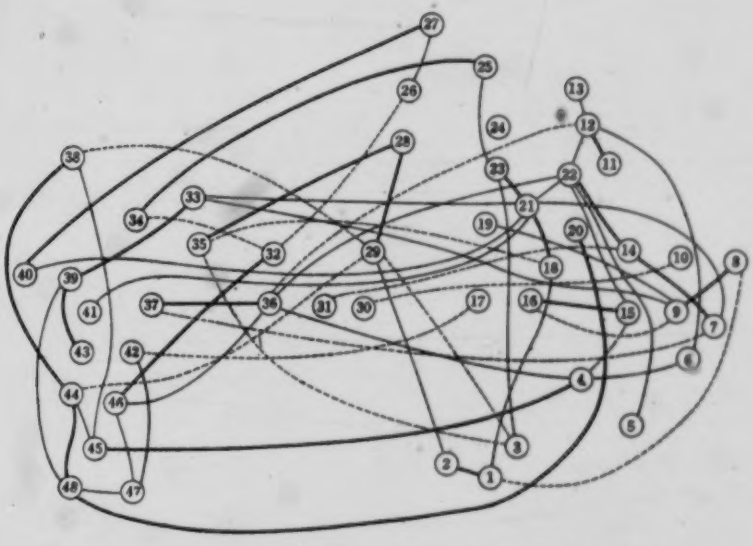


FIG. 10. — *Kinship and Household Location in Sohkynduh.*
——— Matrilineal kinships relations among household-owners;
——— Affinal relations (direct) among household-members;
- - - - - Affinal relations (indirect) among household-members.

particular two families are not restricted to one, but may be accumulated two or three, though I omitted to indicate these in Fig. 10.

582
591
61
621
628

There are some extensions of marriage relations with members outside the village. In Sohkynduh, out of 88 (48 houseowners and 40 their husbands) 13 men and 2 women came from neighbouring villages. Owing to the predominant uxorilocal arrangement, those who came in from outside the village were mostly men. By these members, five different *kur*, new to Sohkynduh, were found, as shown in List 7 (17-21). Most of these outsiders came from villages inside the Kadashinong, or villages no further than a day's journey there and back. This area might be called a secondary endogamous area, and includes more than half a dozen villages. In Kongton, 20 husbands and 3 women came from neighbouring villages by their marriages. The secondary endogamous areas of Kongton and of Sohkynduh are not the same but they overlap in certain places, the surrounding areas being centred on each village. There were, by December 1955, no instances of direct marriage between these two villages.

184
582
621
[795]

There are a few exceptions to local endogamy, such as those individuals who have become Christians and are educated in towns like Shillong or Cherrapunjee. They usually move to a town, seeking

15: Nakane E-3 (1955-1956) 1967 ARP Khasi ARP



some clerical work. However, such instances are very rare in these regions and few Christians are to be found among the people. So far as my genealogical table accounts for, only two boys from Sohkynduh, and one girl and one boy from Kongton, left for Shillong, and married there. In contrast to these exceptional cases in these villages, in the upland Khasi Hills, there are considerable changes in the composition of a village with high geographical and social mobility of population because of the spread of Christian education and urban influence.

The people of the two villages say that marriages with outside people were not formally practised, and were only a recent tendency. However, the composition of the population of the two villages showed extensive movements of population in the past (not to urban areas, but from village to village). Such movement is attributed mostly to migration by a family rather than by an individual on marriage. This type of migration is clearly found also in the process of the formation of Jatinga village (see Appendix, Jatinga).

The composition of the village community and the social characteristics of Sohkynduh and Kongton show very similar features of village endogamy. They seem to be typical of the traditional pattern of Khasi villages. Village endogamy is the intrinsic pattern among the Khasis. This fact can be also observed to a considerable degree in Shella and Jatinga.

[ P. 116 is blank ]

18. Mahapa E.E (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



years after his marriage. During this period he works in his wife's field, then, if the couple gets on well, they start to live together in an independent house (non-heiress's case) or in the wife's house (heiress's case). In spite of the fact that the inhabitants are all Christians, they have retained this custom.

It is difficult to determine at what date the Khasi people have changed from duolocal marriage to uxorilocal marriage. However, the present dwelling unit, with its fluid relationship between husband and wife (in fact, there are many cases of category 3), suggests a situation linked with the duolocal residence pattern. The fragmentary historical information available and the present Khasi residence pattern suggest that the duolocal arrangement may be an older pattern of marriage. When I was in Kongton there was no husband who stayed at his mother's house permanently, visiting his wife at night. The head man told me that, when he married, there were many who did not stay in the wife's house. He was the first person to settle in the wife's house. In his case, he said, he felt sympathy for his wife who had no brother who could work for her. After he had settled in his wife's house, many villagers began to follow his example.[1] When the pattern of a visiting marriage was in vogue, a village must have constituted a more compact endogamous unit. If the husband's house was in another village, a visiting marriage must have been a great inconvenience. The tendency to settle in the wife's house and work for the wife's house must have brought about a wider range of marriage contracts, such as with members of nearby villages, even though in the present form of marriage, village endogamy is much preferred as it is decidedly advantageous particularly for a husband, since he can continue his life in the same familiar environment in spite of uxorilocal marriage.

The variations in the pattern of co-residential grouping, which I have classified into four categories, reflect two different themes in the social structure of the Khasi. On the one hand they represent different stages in the maturity of the individual families concerned. For example, a householder who starts in category 3 or 4 may end as an old man in category 1. On the other hand these variations also reflect the polar opposition between the obligations of matrilineal kinship and the obligations of parenthood; a man, in particular, has conflicting obligations towards the *iing* of his sister and the *iing* of

1. However, all the information which I collected in the upland Khas Hills indicates that the uxorilocal residence pattern has been practised for a long time. According to stories often told by the Kongton people, they migrated from the Jaintia Hills. If these accounts are to be taken as a reflection of the real history of their migration, it would seem that the Kongton people may have kept up the Jaintia custom including the duolocal residence pattern up to recent times, while the majority of the Khasi practised uxorilocal marriage.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7
Garo AR5



lineage is a corporate unilineal descent group of which the members can establish demonstrable genealogical relationships to each other. According to Firth, "lineage is essentially a unilineal descent group with some corporate functions, normally related by segmentary process to other descent groups of the same type, and with them usually covering the entire society" (1957, p. 4). The Garo and the Khasi can then be said to have the lineage, but to lack its segmentary organization which *normally* is found in a unilineal society. Both social structures exemplify the importance of the residence as a functional unit, against the wider descent group which may be called the lineage group.

In the case of the Garo, the localized lineage is expressed in terms of the village (or group of villages) whose land bears the name of the localized lineage. However, it is the village which acts as the functional corporate body, the economic and ritual unit, not the group of members of the localized lineage. The village theoretically consists of the members of the two localized lineages, as represented in the headman and his wife respectively. Practically, though it bears the name of a particular lineage to which the wife of the headman belongs, as also usually the majority of the inhabitants, it includes many other lineage members as well as the traditional two lineages. Therefore, the lineage is not, in this sense, an exclusive corporate unit with a ritual and economic function, though it gives a theoretical framework to the structure.

In the case of the Khasi, the lineage is found only on a household scale, centred in the woman, the property owner with members having direct matrilineal kinship ties to the former, such as her brothers, elder sisters, sons and daughters, who may or may not reside in the same household—the members of the *iing*. Beyond this unit (the *iing*) one can hardly find any functional organization based on the descent system. In other words, the lineage becomes a functional unit only at the level of the household, e.g., the lowest level of segmentation of the descent group, and it lacks wider external organization by the same principle. The clan is considered rather as a ritual conception implying exogamy, not as an organized body of kin.

These phenomena contrast sharply with the Hopi and the Ashanti social organization, where lineage organization has crucial importance wider than on a household level. Many factors can be considered in this connection. First of all, the locus of property and ceremonial unit are the most distinctive features. Among the Khasi, property and ceremonial units are always found in an *iing*, represented by the youngest daughter's household, while that of the Hopi and the Ashanti are in a wider lineage organization in which members of many households are usually included. The Zuni pattern seems also similar to that of the Khasi. The difference between the Khasi and Zuni lies

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

# APPENDIX

## SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM SHELLA AND JATINGA

### Shella

Shella is situated on the lowest of the southern slopes of the Khasi Hills, bordering on the Sylhet plain of East Pakistan. For centuries the people of Shella maintained close trading connections with the people of the plain, so that they have been much influenced by the Hindu. They have been to some extent divorced economically and culturally from their own people who live on the uplands and on higher part of the slopes. Actually, this is a natural result of their geographical location. From Cherrapunjee, the southern edge of the upland Khasi Hills, only a narrow footpath goes down to Shella. The altitude of Cherrapunjee is about 5,000 feet and of Shella from 500 to 1,000 feet, and the distance between them is 8 miles. The path descends very steeply and is full of hard stones. This difficulty of communication is also why the Hindu influence did not penetrate the upland Khasi, as in the case of the Jaintia Hills.[1]

This area has a unique political organization which differs from the majority of Khasi states who are traditionally ruled by the members of the Siem clan. Shella is organized as a confederation, called 'Shella Confederacy,' and consists of four local villages. The head of the village is called *sordadkar*, and is elected by the villagers every three years. The number of households of the Shella Confederacy was about 500 in January 1956. The names of the four villages and their *sordadkar* in 1956 were:

| *Name of village* | *Name of sordadkar* |
|---|---|
| 1. Shella | Dewish Mohan Roy |
| 2. Mashtoli | Dhanjoy Roy |
| 3. Nongtrai | Orja Roy |
| 4. Tyngngar | Jahoni Roy |

Each village is divided into sections. For instance, Shella village has nine sections: (1) Jaur, (2) Dkarong, (3) Dubu, (4) Jamon, (5) Nongrum, (6) Nongmeng,

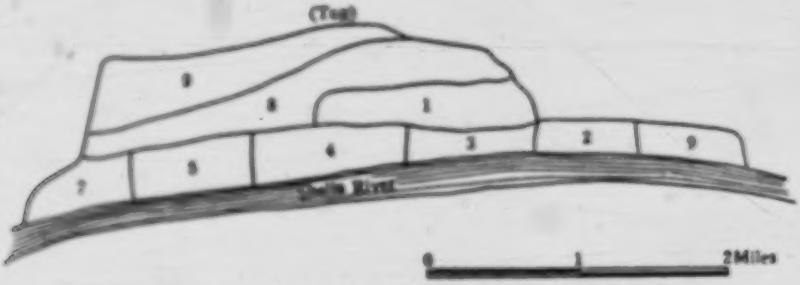
1. However, Shella was the only way out and the main gateway from the Khasi Hills to the plain; it was here that the British first entered the Khasi Hills. They proceeded from Shella to Cherrapunjee and made the latter headquarters of the Khasi Hills in 1833.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



[Shella]

(7) Mawrong'khong, (8) Rynsong-kanor, and (9) Sholap, as shown in Map 9. In Shella village the number of households in each section ranges between 10 and 80. Such a section is called *khèr*, and was supposed to be the site of households of segments of every *kur* (clan). It seems that Shella village was once composed of nine different *kur* which could intermarry with each other. However, nowadays, each section, as appeared in my census, has nothing to do with the *kur* as such; it is simply a geographical section. According to the information which I gathered, there had been a tendency for the same *kur* people to gather within the section, before the great earthquake in 1897 brought considerable




MAP 9. — *Distribution of Sections in Shella Village.*

damages and death to this area: many of them left the village at the time and many houses changed their sites in the village when they were reconstructed. For instance, the composition of Jasir section in January 1956 was as follows:

| *Name of kur* | *Number of houses* | *Name of kur* | *Number of houses* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Yuchyne | 7 | 9. Lyngdoh | 1 |
| 2. Iunei | 4 | 10. Riang | 1 |
| 3. Lorit | 4 | 11. Nongtathiang | 1 |
| 4. Synrem | 3 | 12. Loki | 1 |
| 5. Kasieng | 3 | 13. Kanto | 1 |
| 6. Nongbri | 3 | 14. Kanti | 1 |
| 7. Siem | 2 | 15. Khelwa | 1 |
| 8. Iunei | 2 | 16. ? | 5 |
| | | Total | 40 |

The people said that in Jasir, the Yuchyne was the most influential *kur*, and must have been the original *kur* in this section. However, no clan solidarity could be observed. These seven households were socially and economically quite independent of each other, as are all other households. As a whole, the importance of *kur* diminished a great deal in this village. Five households in Jasir were reluctant to mention their *kur*; some of them did not care about their *kur*; others were not themselves certain to which *kur* they belonged. The *kur* is losing its function to a great extent. This can be ascribed to the high degree of sophistication and mobility. However, except for one Siem woman who came from the uplands and married a man of this village, all 15 *kur* mentioned above are local clans frequently found within the Shella Confederacy. In this area also community endogamy was predominant. Perhaps the Shella

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



## Shella

Confederacy forms a more marked endogamous community, through being cut off geographically and economically from the rest of the Khasi, and socially from the neighbouring Hindu people.

### *The Economy and the People.*

Shella lies along the upper part of the Shella River and stretches upwards along the steep slope, looking down towards the Bengal plain. The climate of this part of the hills is considered to be one of the worst in tropical India for human habitation. The Bengal plain, though warmer than this area, is considered more healthy. This border land is the zone of malaria, typhoid, black fever, cholera, etc. None of the Bengalee peasants dare to live in such an area. However, it is the most fertile for products such as betel-nuts, pan-leaves, oranges, bananas and pineapples, and it also produces limestone. These people seem to prefer to settle in this zone and to enjoy its prosperity, at the expense of human lives: every year, especially between March and September, the inhabitants suffer from various fevers and dysentry and other diseaes, many of the weaker facing death.

Before the Partition of India and Pakistan, the products of Shella were carried down the Shella River to Sylhet, one of the biggest centres in East Bengal, which brought unimaginable wealth to the Shella people. Their houses were built by carpenters from Sylhet. The style and structure of these houses were exceptionally elaborate for the Khasi. They purchased vast rice fields in the plain, which used to be cultivated by Bengalee and Garo labourers engaged by them. These Khasi do not themselves know how to cultivate rice fields; they have always been managers or landowners. Their boys used to be sent to high schools and colleges in Sylhet. As a result of their trading with the Bengalee, many of them read and speak fluent Bengalee. There is no difference between their style of clothing and that of the Bengalee, though the women maintain their traditional dress in the Shella style.

They have thus been distinguished from the rest of the Khasi not only geographically, but also economically and culturally. Their personality also differs sharply from the rest of the Khasi. They are very sociable, and quick, a quality lacking among the Khasi of Sohkynduh and Kongton. They are clever enough to deal with strangers. The upland Khasi say Shella people are very cunning. This remark shows one side of these people. They had to be cunning, since they traded with the Sylhet Bengalee who were said to be the most cunning of their race. Their role in the trade and in the history of the modernization of the Hills was considerable. For centuries they represented intellectual Khasi owing to their contact with Hindu civilization, while the Hills remained in darkness. They assumed an important role when the British established an administration in the Hills, and even up to now, many leading Khasi originated from this area: for instance, Lati Hat, the first interpreter of the British Headquarters at Cherrapunjee; Jeebon Roy, who was the first Magistrate among the Khasi; Maham Sing, a lawyer and Member of the Legislative Assembly (the grandson of Jeebon Roy); Nichols Roy, Minister of Health and Prisons of the Assam Government, Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Missionary of the Church of God; R. R. Thomas (brother of Nichols Roy), Principal of the Gauhati University, etc.

Through constant cultural contact with Hindu, and encouraged by their economic prosperity, the Shella Khasi, like the Jaintias, have been much influenced by Hindu culture. However, this does not mean that the people of Shella adopted the Hindu beliefs. Though there is a small Hindu shrine, and some ceremonial elements were borrowed from the Hindu, most of the

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



wife who lives with him. The Khasi woman lives with her mother. Some say the Khasi woman is his second wife, other say their marriage is not recognized by the public.

Actually, owing to the bad climate, very few non-Khasi live in this area. Besides the two non-Khasi just mentioned, there were a Bengalee tax collector and an Assamese Forest Officer, both of whom lived at Shella Bazaar. Bengalee villages are situated about five miles south of Shella. Except in the bazaar, Bengalee and Khasi have no social contact with each other, and intermarriages have been rare.

However, it is obvious that in the past the Khasi must have had many cases of intermarriage with Bengalee. Among the Khasi, there is a clan called 'Dkhar.' The term 'Dkhar' is also used for the peoples of the plains: Bengalee are called 'Dkhar' by the Khasi. They say that the Dkhar clan originated in Bengalee girls who married Khasi men and who went to live in the Hills. It is said that in older days, the Khasi often raided the Sylhet plain and kidnapped Bengalee girls as well as goods. In Bengalee records of Sylhet, Khasi appear as 'bloody Khasi.' Khasi old men say that in order to increase their population they did sometimes kidnap Bengalee girls, but that they treated these girls very nicely and kindly, no differently from their own people. Since they follow the matrilineal system, they decided to name their descendants 'Dkhar.' It is said that all the present Dkhar people are descendants of such marriages. The Dkhar are found more on the southern slopes of the Khasi Hills i.e. among the Wars.

It seems there were many reasons for the descendants by marriage between the Khasi and the Bengalee to become Khasi. First of all, it is said that in the olden days the Khasi wanted to increase the population by such marriages. At the same time, a Bengalee who married a Khasi became an outcast from his or her own society owing to the caste system, and this inevitably made them Khasi. Secondly, the Khasi were primarily grouped into the *iing*, and they considered the marriage relation as of secondary importance. Hence it was rather difficult to remove by marriage a Khasi man or woman from their native place. Thirdly, Khasi could hardly live in the plain where no betel-nut or pan-leaf gardens were available; they could not engage in rice cultivation in the plain, as the technique is entirely different from the cultivation of betel-nut or pan-leaf. Moreover, they said they could not stand the heat in the plain. Therefore, the orientation of intermarriages was always towards the Khasi community: the Khasi brought outsiders to their own land; they did not themselves leave.

Such a marked tendency on the part of the Khasi to remain attached to their own homeland, is in no way contradictory with the phenomena of their migration to places outside the Khasi Hills, owing to the exploitation of their homeland and to the increase in population. The formation of Jatinga represents such an instance; there are also the cases of modern Khasi women from sophisticated urban areas, who easily leave their homeland, after marriage with a non-Khasi; this also appears in the following data on Jatinga.

## JATINGA

Jatinga is a Khasi village situated in the North Cachar Hills, three miles west from Haflong, the headquarters of the North Cachar Hills. The number of households was about sixty in February 1956. Their economy depends on the pan-leaf, orange and pineapple gardens, similar to that of the Shella people.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



621 [Jatinga]

[175] This village was founded in 1905 by Khasi immigrants from the Jaintia Hills. [101] At the entrance of the village, a bust of the founder, Lakhanbang Suchiang, [211] stands facing towards the east; it was erected on the occasion of the celebration [346] of their Golden jubilee, in November 1955. Houses are scattered along the [771] ridge of the moutain to the east and to the west; in the centre is the church. All the inhabitants are Christians. Before the Partition this was one of the most modern and prosperous villages in Assam.

101 Jatinga provides a very interesting instance of the Khasi 'colonial' village. It is surrounded by villages of the Kuki, of the Zemi-Naga, and of the Cacharee, 121 who constitute the main population of the North Cachar Hills, and who are tribes entirely different from the Khasi, in economy, social organization, language 621 and culture. Therefore, Jatinga is like an island of Khasi community. I took this village as one of my fields, because I was particularly interested to discover how far the Khasi matrilineal organization is kept up in a community thus situated, surrounded by patrilineal tribes, and considerably modernized by Christianization and economic prosperity; and I was also interested in the process of formation of a new village, in comparison with Rinsibara and Joshipara in the Garo Hills.

### *Formation of the Present Population of Jatinga.*

#### *The first immigrants to Jatinga.*

101 The main population of Jatinga, including the founder, originated in Bataw 166 village in the Jaintia Hills, twelve miles away from Jaintiapur, the capital of the then Jaintia Rajas. This village is situated on the border of the Jaintia 175 Hills and the East Bengal plain, the location being very similar to that of Shella, as are their culture and economy. In the later part of the nineteenth 621 century, some members of Bataw village moved to Borkhala, ten miles from Silchar, one of the biggest villages of the then Cacharee king.

These immigrants who came to Borkhala stayed there about fifteen years before they came to Jatinga. Kloribon, the first daughter of the founder's sister was born there. In November 1905, some Christian Khasi left Borkhala for Jatinga, acting on information gathered from a Welsh Mission at Haflong, that the land of present Jatinga was fertile and fit for their cultivation. They 166 were the first immigrants to Jatinga. The Government record names the following three persons as the first immigrants to Jatinga: Suchiang Lakhanbang, 551 Tariang, and Suchen Munik. In fact, according to the data which I collected 614 at Jatinga, Suchiang Lakhanbang was accompanied by the following persons (the names in brackets indicate the clans):

621 his wife, Misibon (Phanwar),[1]
175 his brother, Pryntah, and Pryntah's wife, Sintu (Rupsi),
his sister, Laptho, and Laptho's husband, Munik (Suchen) with their daughter, Kloribon, and Munik's younger brother, Sain.
his friend, Tariang.

Soon after their settlement, Sain, the brother of Munik, brought his wife Tahin (Suiam) from Jaintia. Misibon brought her younger sister, Diasibon. Tariang who came with Lakhanbang afterwards called his wife, Palong. But having spent some time there, they left eventually for another place, so that

1. Misibon was a native of the Cherrapunjee area of the Khasi Hills (not of Jaintia like the others). She was a school teacher at Cherrapunjee, and later became a teacher at a school near Jaintiapur, where she married Lakhanbang.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



there are none of their descendants in Jatinga. Summing up, the first party who settled at Jatinga was composed of people of the following five clans:

1. Suchiang — Lakhanbang, his sister, Laptho, and her daughter, Kloribon, his brother, Pryntah.
2. Suchen — Munik and his younger brother, Sain.
3. Phanwar — Misibon and her younger sister, Diasibon.
4. Rupsi — Sintu, the wife of Pryntah.
5. Suiam — Tahin, the wife of Sain.

Among them, Suchen had no female member. Phanwar had no successor: Misibon had no issue and Diasibon did not marry. Therefore, Suchiang, Rupsi and Suiam are the oldest clans in present Jatinga. Suchiang and Rupsi especially are the dominant and richest groups among the present population.

This was the time when the railway from Gauhati to Silchar was being constructed. Some Khasi labourers were working at Haflong on the construction of the railway. After the foundation of Jatinga, these Khasi workers established marriage relations with the Khasi of Jatinga, and finally, upon completion of the railway, many of them became the inhabitants of Jatinga. The present members of the Dome and Siangshai clans are the descendants of these people, and they form a considerable number of the present inhabitants of Jatinga. Besides them, there were a few other Khasi at Haflong who were engaged in trading business. In the course of time, they also had marital relations with Jatinga people and came to Jatinga.

After five years had elapsed they found that in spite of their hard work the land was not favourable to them. Many of them left Jatinga. This was the hardest period of Jatinga history.

*The second migration (1919-1925).*

The railway which once had been blocked was reopened in 1919. The people who had left Jatinga came back to settle there. This time the circumstances seemed to them quite favourable. The pan trees which they had planted earlier were growing and they could gather considerable produce. The village grew bigger around 1920 as a result of new immigrants from Jaintia; most of them were people from Bataw, the village of the founder. In this period, many immigrants came from Jaintia not only to Jatinga but also to Sylhet, Borkhala and other places outside the Khasi-Jaintia Hills. It seems that by this time the over-populated Jaintia realised that these areas were favourable for their new home. However, the successive waves of Jaintia immigrants to Jatinga ceased by 1925, its population having reached saturation point.

Orange production brought economic prosperity to the people of Jatinga. Wealthy villagers employed temporary labourers from the Jaintia Hills every year. Some of these labourers came with their families and others came individually. During their stay at Jatinga, some of them married and settled there. Hence, there are also descendants of such labourers among the present inhabitants of Jatinga.

*Some Aspects of Descent Groups.*

Throughout the history of Jatinga, immigrations have always been undertaken by a family (elementary family, siblings) or by an individual, but never by a group of clan members. Therefore, the present population is grouped in small descent groups according to each migration. Though some of them happened to have the same clan name, their history of migration and their

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR



621 descent grouping are often different. This is a very similar pattern to the [184] mobility which I discussed in Sohkynduh and Kongton (see p. 112).

One of the outstanding features in this community is the strong paternal 178 authority, established especially in the first generation, because the father's 593 (husband's) contribution was very important in such circumstances: their domestic units were completely independent from the *iing* either of husband 61 or wife. Some of them came with their wives, and many younger ones and their sons brought their wives from their homeland afterwards, thus practising 621 virilocal marriage.

They have an interesting social usage which reflects the importance of the husband of the first generation. This is the addition of the name of the husband of the first generation to the matrilineal clan name in order to differentiate each particular descent group established at Jatinga within the same clan. For instance, Rupsi-Tah, Rupsi-Loh, Rupsi-Khla and Rupsi-Lati are found in the Rupsi clan. Rupsi-Tah is one of the lines of the first immigrants to Jatinga, which I have mentioned as Rupsi: Tah was taken from Pryntah, the husband of Sintu (Rupsi) (see p. 171). Thus the present inhabitants of Jatinga are very conscious of their father or grandfather, though they strictly follow the matrilineal descent rule. From such a usage of naming a clan, the Indian officer, who gave me some information about Jatinga before I went there, made the mistaken deduction that they had changed from matrilineal to patrilineal, assuming this to have come about as a result of the influence of patrilineal tribes around Jatinga. But this is simply due to the fact, firstly, that they hold in high regard the man of the first generation, because of his great contribution; secondly, that they distinguish themselves from members of the same clan according to the descent group established at each immigration; in other words, it indicates each *iing* grouping in the village.

178 The fundamental Khasi social organization based on the matrilineal system did not change at all. I could observe in Jatinga exactly the same principle 184 in action as I had found in Sohkynduh and Kongton. The village endogamy has also been well established in the present generation: there are about 20 dif- 582 ferent clans which can intermarry, and taking a spouse from an outside com- 61 munity has become very rare nowadays. Marriage patterns in relation to the *iing* structure and all its related aspects are surprisingly similar to that of the 621 communities in the Khasi Hills. The solidarity of the *iing* is even greater in Jatinga, particularly among the rich, because of the greater accumulation of wealth and greater economic activity, which also increases the authority of the *iing* as manager of considerable property—this was also the case with the Shella people. Jatinga demonstrates that in spite of colonization and of a significant change in economic activities, Khasi social organization has maintained itself intact. This situation is in contrast with the considerable social changes observed among the Garo community in colonial areas like Rinsibara and Joshipara.

621 *Intermarriage.*

178 From the earliest period of the establishment of Jatinga up to the present, 582 some changing aspects of marriage patterns relating to intermarriages are to be observed.

563 As I stated before, in the earlier period, the people used to bring their spouses from their homeland, but they also married neighbouring tribal peoples, namely, 563 the Zemi-Naga, the Kuki and the Cacharee of villages close to Jatinga, and also the Lushai, the Bengalee, the Moslem and the Anglo-Indian who lived 621 in Haflong, the biggest political and commercial centre in the Hills, situated

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



three miles away from Jatinga. As one may expect in such a situation, quite a number of intermarriages with these peoples appear in my census of Jatinga. The resultant of these intermarriages was that when the couple and their children lived in Jatinga, they were considered to have become Khasi; otherwise they were held to be non-Khasi, whether the spouse was man or woman. This orientation of social recognition of the result of intermarriage was generally seen among Khasi in such situations, not only in the case of Jatinga.

The following are extracts of intermarriages from my genealogical table of Jatinga people.

*A*. Cases of intermarriages in which the descendants became Khasi.

1. A woman of the Dome clan married a Kuki man. All members of the present Dome clan at Jatinga are their descendants.
2. A woman of the Rymbai clan married a Kuki man as her second marriage. Their descendants are Rymbai.
3. A man of the Suchiang clan married a Mikir woman, and lived in Jatinga. They had one daughter who married a man of the Hua clan of Jatinga. They named this woman's line 'Shadap' as one of the Khasi clans. Later this Mikir woman's sister's daughter married a man of Rupsi-Lati, and their descendants were also named 'Shadap' by the villagers. Thus Shadap clan was created by a Mikir woman who married a Khasi man of Jatinga.
4. A Khasi man married a Lushai woman and lived at Aijal, the headquarters of the Lushai Hills. They said he became Lushai. Later a man of the Pajat clan of Jatinga married his daughter from Aijal. This couple lives at Jatinga and has several children. The villagers said they have to give them a new clan name. It is under consideration.

*B*. Cases of intermarriages leading to the emigration of Jatinga inhabitants.

5. A man of Jatinga married a woman of Zemi-Naga as his second marriage and lives at his wife's village.
6. A woman (the daughter of the woman of Rymbai, who married a Kuki: A-2) married a Moslem man and lives at Haflong.
7. A woman of Rymbai married a Panjabee and lives at Shillong. This woman is (B-6)'s mother's sister's daughter.
8. A woman of Siangshai clan married an Assamese and lives at Gauhati.
9. A woman of Rupsi-Tah married an Anglo-Indian and has gone to the United Provinces.
10. A woman of Jatinga married a man of Zemi-Naga and went to his village.
11. A woman of Jatinga married a man of Cacharee and lived at his village some time, but she came back to Jatinga after divorcing him.

*A* cases belong to the earlier period when Jatinga had a shortage of population, while *B* cases, except 10 and 11, are found among the present younger generation. The population, which had increased rapidly in the last twenty years with economic prosperity, is suffering from the recent economic depression caused by the Partition as well as from the great damages done to their orange gardens and pan-leaf gardens by tree diseases. Moreover they have an unbalanced rate of birth according to sex: females are more numerous than males. Therefore, many daughters marry out as shown in the cases of *B*. The above-cited cases are only concerned with intermarriages with non-Khasi, but there are still other women who married Khasi men and who reside outside Jatinga, as for example, at Haflong and Shillong.

In the village there are still many unmarried girls without suitable spouses. In the olden days, it was less difficult to marry neighbouring tribal peoples,

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7



like the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki. But after the period of economic prosperity as I shall describe in the next section, the Jatinga people reached a rather high level of education, while most of the neighbouring tribes remained illiterate. Their standard of living likewise improved. Fashionable girls of Jatinga who have studied at the Convent school in Shillong, and speak English and Hindi, cannot marry half-naked tribesmen who work in the jungle. They prefer to intermarry with Moslem, Panjabee or Assamese who belong to amore sophisticated community, and through whom they can enjoy urban life. Thus the orientation of the intermarriage of the people of Jatinga has changed, along with the growth of Jatinga.

It should be noted that intermarriages came mostly through the contacts at Haflong, where people used to go once a week for the bazaar, rather than through direct contacts with neighbouring villages.

*Economy of Jatinga and its Relation to Neighbouring Tribes.*

It is very interesting to find two different kinds of economy in the same ecological background: Jatinga Khasi practise pan-leaf and orange cultivation and depend mainly on a trading economy, while the other neighbouring tribal peoples practise jhum cultivation, almost a subsistence economy. This situation has remained unchanged for the last fifty years since the establishment of Jatinga village.

The first Jatinga immigrants occupied one ridge of the mountain where the present Jatinga is situated. Formerly, this land belonged to the Zemi-Naga, one of the old inhabitants of the Cachar Hills, who possessed a vast jungle area for jhum cultivation. It seems that there was no objection to the Khasi occupying this small spot: it was apparently too small an area for the jhum cultivator —pan-leaf cultivation of the Khasi requires less than one twentieth of the land of the usual jhum cultivation. The Khasi who started pan-leaf cultivation were able to accumulate some capital, and after several years they started orange gardens. They had had experience of orange cultivation in their homeland, but this was the first time they had operated commercially.

The success of this orange cultivation was beyond their dreams. Hearing of good oranges at Jatinga, many Bengalee merchants from Dacca, Sylhet, Silchar and Gauhati began to come to buy them. Moreover, the village had the great advantage of being situated near the railway station. Oranges were sold by carloads. Unimaginable wealth came to the Jatinga people. Especially the founder's family, including his brother's and sister's, became extraordinarily wealthy; their income used to be Rs. 20,000 a year. The children were sent to the school which was established in the village and some were educated at colleges in Dacca, Sylhet and Shillong. The villagers had beautiful houses built by Manipuri and Bengalee carpenters. Actually the houses of Jatinga were known as some of the best construction in Assam.

Like the Shella people, they were managers of gardens and employed workers. Wealthy households used to engage several labourers annually, most of them from Jaintia where the Jatinga people had originated. These workers were provided with shelter in the servant quarters of their employer's house, but they had to provide meals for themselves. They were paid daily according to the work done. They were available to other households, when their employer had no work. Some labourers were also engaged locally among the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki, though not as many as among the Jaintia. These local tribes were fairly well occupied by their jhum cultivation, and not used to being employed as workers. Therefore, most of them were not regular

another. In other words, a state is not a fixed territorial entity. In the early twentieth century, the most populous of the 25 chiefdoms, Khyrim, contained 36,833 persons occupying 7,859 houses in 372 villages, and the least populous, Nonglwai, contained 246 persons occupying 53 houses in 3 villages. Fifteen of the chiefdoms were headed by a *syiem* (chief), three by a *lyngdoh* (priest), six by a sirdar, and one by a *wahadadar*. These leaders all had executive and judicial functions, but a chief's authority was limited in that he had to obtain the approval of his executive council before acting. The other leaders were subject to a similar limitation. A chief maintained a small police force. His major sources of revenue were market tolls, fines, and, more recently, income from licenses to distill rice whisky. Succession to a ruling role in the larger states traditionally involved election by members of a lineage that had a hereditary right to elect, from among members of a lineage that had the hereditary right to rule. In British times, the elective basis was broadened, differentially in the various states, even to the point of popular elections. [Cf. Aitchison 1931; Lyngdoh 1952.] **Social stratification.** The three classes of lineage are the nobles, the commoners, and the slaves or servants. This stratification applies only to the recruitment to office in the native-state system, for there is no hypergamy, and in a village assembly everyone has equal voice. The noble lineages have the hereditary right to fill from among their male members roles such as village or state priest, councilor to a chief, or elector of a chief. The few lineages which today are remembered as slave or servant lineages had the inherited obligation to render special services to a chief's household. There is no Khasi term for "commoner." Every lineage other than a noble or a slave lineage is a commoner lineage, and the commoner lineages are in the majority. **Warfare.** Warfare was suppressed by the British, and little is known for certain about its traditional forms. The tactics which confronted the British were the ambush and the guerrilla raid. Traditional goals included taking heads from other Khasis and capturing women from the valleys.

**RELIGION. Major and indigenous religions.** A Welsh Calvinistic Methodist missionary penetrated into Cherrapunji in 1832, and the work that he began continues to this day. His society, which has since become the Welsh Presbyterian Foreign Mission, introduced writing, village primary schools, a high school, a theological seminary, and a hospital. Competing missionaries followed, and by 1914 some Shillong Khasis were puzzling over the tenets not only of traditional Hinduism and Islam but also of the Buddhists, Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, and Unitarians (Roy 1914). By the 1920s, missionaries of the Church of God and the Seventh Day Adventists were

19: Assam G-5 (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7



CHAPTER IV

## Result of the survey

4.1. **Distribution of sample.**—It has already been mentioned in Chapter I that purposive selection of ten villages from border area, eight villages from the project area and a random selection of ten villages from the general area, were made for intensive investigation. 125 128

It is not our intention to devote this Chapter on the specific needs of individual villages. Some common salient features of the villages relating to the situation of the villages, diseases occurring there and marketing, communication, educational and medical facilities obtainable in those villages are briefly described below for the purpose of giving intelligence into the condition of the sample villages.

The following table shows the group-wise distribution of the sample villages, their location by thana and subdivision and the number of families inhabiting each village at the time of the survey.

## TABLE B-I

**Sample villages in United K. & J. Hills and their location** 621 •

| Group | Name of villages | Thana | Subdivision | No. of families |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| Border area— | 1. Lumshnong .. | Jowai .. | Jowai .. | 68 |
| | 2. Amki .. | Dawki .. | Do .. | 18 |
| | 3. Syndai .. | Do .. | Do .. | 135 |
| | 4. Darrang .. | Do .. | Do .. | 104 |
| | 5. Lyngkhat .. | Do .. | Do .. | 26 |
| | 6. Nongjri .. | Cherra ... | Shillong ... | 223 |
| | 7. Bholaganj ... | Do .. | Do .. | 84 |
| | 8. Shella .. | Do .. | Do .. | 236 |
| | 9. Mawdon .. | Do .. | Do .. | 52 |
| | 10. Bajat .. | Do .. | Do .. | 65 |

• 621

| Group (1) | Name of villages (2) | Thana (3) | Subdivision (4) | No. of families (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Project area — | 11. Sutnga .. | Jowai .. | Jowai .. | 129 |
| | 12. Sohkha .. | Dawki .. | Do .. | 95 |
| | 13. Mustem ... | Jowai .. | Do .. | 85 |
| | 14. Nartiang .. | Jowai ... | Do .. | 161 |
| | 15. Raitong .. | Nongpoh .. | Shillong .. | 47 |
| | 16. Umden .. | Do .. | Do .. | 32 |
| | 17. Patharkhmah .. | Do .. | Do .. | 22 |
| | 18. Mawphaniew .. | Shillong ... | Do .. | 74 |
| General area— | 19. Iapmala .. | Jowai .. | Jowai .. | 24 |
| | 20. Lamarsiang .. | Do ... | Do ... | 25 |
| | 21. Mawkynchian .. | Do .. | Do ... | 40 |
| | 22. Jympiat .. | Shillong ... | Shillong .. | 7 |
| | 23. Domrya .. | Do .. | Shillong .. | 20 |
| | 24. Mawkhli .. | Do .. | Do ... | 16 |
| | 25. Mawlaiteng ... | Do .. | Do .. | 20 |
| | 26. Asale .. | Do .. | Do .. | 5 |
| | 27. Jowe ... | Nongpoh .. | Do .. | 7 |
| | 28. Byrbeh .. | Do .. | Do ... | 20 |
| | | Total — : | | 1,837 |

731 132 49 **4.2 Natural calamities.**—The villages are free from severe natural calamities like flood, erosion, earthquake and the like. Excessive rain has rendered the higher lands barren near Cherapunjee, Mawsynram, etc. During the monsoon after heavy rains, the small rivulets and streams come in spate dislocating communication from village to village which cause much inconvenience to the people in carrying on trade, marketing and other day to day activities.

19: Assam G-5 (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7



# CHAPTER V

## Population and Occupation

The following table shows the number of families and population of the sample villages in the different village groups.

162*
161
125
621 •

**TABLE C-1**

| 1 | Border area 2 | Project area 3 | General area 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| No. of villages .. .. | 10 | 8 | 10 |
| No. of families ... .. | 1,086 | 647 | 184 |
| No. of persons .. .. | 3,674 | 2,965 | 902 |
| Average no. of families per village. | 101 | 81 | 18 |
| Average no. of persons per village. | 367·4 | 370·6 | 90·2 |
| Average no. of persons per family. | 3·6 | 4·6 | 4·9 |

The population in the first two groups of villages is much more than in the third group because important villages were intentionally selected from border and project areas. The figures may not truely reflect the difference in the average size of villages in these areas.

The population in the selected villages were compared with the 1951 census figures. But it was found that the two sets of figures are not strictly comparable due to changes in the names and boundaries of the villages and emigrations. A note on this study is included in the appendix. [128]

19: Assam G-5 (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7



5.2: The following table shows the classification of population by age and sex in the three areas:—

**Age and Sex Composition of Population**

| Age Group | Border area | | | Project area | | | General area | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
| 1. Below 5 yrs. | 293 | 328 | 621 (16·90) | 299 | 295 | 594 (20·03) | 77 | 87 | 164 (18·18) |
| 2. 5 to below 15 yrs. | 426 | 459 | 885 (24·09) | 380 | 373 | 753 (25·40) | 127 | 112 | 239 (26·50) |
| 3. 15 to below 65 yrs. | 1025 | 1077 | 2102 (57·21) | 722 | 862 | 1584 (53·42) | 258 | 236 | 494 (54·76) |
| 4. 65 yrs. & above | 26 | 40 | 66 (1·80) | 16 | 18 | 34 (1·15) | 3 | 2 | 5 (0·56) |
| Total | 1770 | 1904 | 3674 (100·00) | 1417 | 1548 | 2965 (100·00) | 465 | 437 | 902 (100·00) |
| No. of females per 1,000 males | .. | 1076 | .. | .. | .. | 1092 | .. | .. | 940 |

It is seen that the population under 15 years of age in the border area, project area and general area were respectively 41 per cent, 45 per cent and 45 per cent of the total population in these areas, while that under age group 'between 15 to 65 years', constituted respectively 57 per cent, 53 per cents 55 per cent of the population in the three areas.

It is evident that population of females was as a whole greater than that of male in border area and project area and less in general area. The number of females per 1,000 males in border area, project area and general area were respectively 1,076, 1,002 and 940 against the 1951 census figure of 983 females per 1,000 males in the rural areas of the district of United K-J. Hills.

5.3: The following table shows the classification of population by religion.

**TABLE C-3**

**Classification of Population by Religion**

| Area | Tribal religion | Christianity | Hinduism | Other religion | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| 1. Border area | 1766 (48·07) | 1410 (38·38) | 483 (13·15) | 15 (0.41) | 3674 (100·00) |
| 2. Project area | 811 (27·35) | 2013 (67.89) | 141 (4.76) | 0.00 | 2965 (100·00) |
| 3. General area | 309 (34·26) | 571 (63·30) | 22 (2·44) | 0.00 | 902 (100·00) |

Population following Hinduism and other religion in the border area comprises mostly of displaced persons from East Pakistan following trade and business as their means of livelihood, while those in the general and project areas are mainly the Nepalies who are generally engaged in cattle rearing and agriculture.

19: Assam G-5 (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7



# APPENDIX

## Population and Occupation

### No. of families and population of sample villages

*162
• 621

| Name of village | No. of persons according to 1951 Census | No. of persons according to Present survey | Variation | No. of families according to listing Schedule | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Border Area—** | | | | | |
| 1. Bholaganj | .. | 313 | .. | 84 | |
| 2. Balat | .. | 255 | .. | 65 | |
| 3. Nongjri | .. | 805 | .. | 223 | |
| 4. Shilla | .. | 830 | .. | 236 | |
| 5. Darrang | .. | 490 | .. | 104 | |
| 6. Syndai | .. | 378 | .. | 135 | Average size of village 100.6 |
| 7. Mawdon | .. | 204 | .. | 52 | |
| 8. Lyngkhat | .. | 68 | .. | 26 | Average family size 3.6 |
| 9. Lumshnong | ... | 280 | ... | 63 | |
| 10. Aniki | .. | 51 | .. | 18 | |
| Total .. | .. | 3674 | ... | 1006 | |
| **Project Area—** | | | | | |
| 11. Sohkha | .. | 433 | .. | 95 | .. |
| 12. Sutnga | .. | 639 | .. | 127 | Average size of village 80.6 |
| 13. Mawphaniew | ... | 368 | .. | 74 | |
| 14. Patharkhmah | .. | 134 | .. | 28 | Average family size 4.6 |
| 15. Raitong | .. | 233 | .. | 47 | |
| 16. Umden | .. | 153 | .. | 33 | |
| 17. Nartiang | .. | 576 | .. | 164 | |
| 18. Mustem | .. | 419 | .. | 85 | .. |
| Total .. | . | 2965 | .. | 647 | .. |

| Name of village | No. of persons according to | | Variation | No. of families according to listing schedule | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1951 Census | Present survey | | | |
| General Area— | | | | | |
| 19. Mawlaiteng | 113 | 86 | −27 | 20 | Average size of village 18·4 |
| 20. Jympiat | 87 | 48 | −39 | 7 | |
| 21. Asola | 29 | 22 | −7 | 5 | .. .. |
| 22. Domrya | 76 | 16 | 40 | 20 | |
| 23. Lamyrsiang | 119 | 97 | −22 | 29 | Average family size 4·9 |
| 24. Iapmala | 126 | 161 | 35 | 24 | |
| 25. Mawkynshian | 163 | 159 | −4 | 40 | |
| 26. Jowe | 48 | 31 | −17 | 7 | |
| 27. Byrheh | 114 | 106 | −8 | 20 | |
| 28. Mawkhi | 49 | 76 | 27 | 16 | |
| Total .. | 924 | 902 | −20 | 184 | .. .. |

*N. B.*—1951 census population figures are not shown against Border Area and Project Area villages. This is because of the fact that in some cases in the Census report, the different blocks of a village have been enumerated as different villages, *e.g.*, the village **Sohkha** has been enumerated in **1951** census as three villages, *viz.*, **Sohkha Phlang, Sohkha** mission, etc., while in some other cases, only one population figure has been recorded against a number of villages of which possibly one is the main village, others being its satellites and as these villages were selected without any reference to the **Census** Handbook, there is every likelihood of our selected villages not coinciding with **Census** villages. So far as migration is concerned it is **very** rare in big villages, **particularly** when they have some settled occupation but it was found through investigation that in some of the border villages due to continued adversities in their agricultural and other occupation people had to move away in search of work. **Migration** of some traders was reported from **Bholaganj** and **Lyngkhat**. Some Khasi families **were** reported to have migrated to Pakistan where they had got **agricultural** land. Heaviest emigration of this type was however, reported from **Sohkha**, a village selected from **Saipung-Darrang, M. P. C. D. Block, but located near** the Indo-Pak Border, where about **one third** of its **total** population was said to have migrated to **Pakistan**. Some families from **Mawdon** are said to have migrated to a nearby village due to unhealthy condition of the village. A study of population variation in **General area** villages given above, will show that there is **a net decrease of 20 persons** in the sample villages from **total number of persons recorded** in **1951** Census. This is accounted for by migration of **people** which is considerable in smaller villages particularly those depending on **shifting** cultivation. A few families from **Mawlaiteng** are said to have migrated to **Mawlum** a village **only a few furlong** away from **Mawlaiteng.** Migration was also reported from **Lamyrsiang, Domrya, Asola,** and **Jowe** from **Byrheh** and **Mawkynshian** a few families were said to have left the village a few days ahead of the **date** of investigation for their cultivation at some distant place.

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7



There is considerable trade carried on in
245 *tezpát* or bay leaves, the trees being extensively cultivated by the
439 inhabitants of the lower slopes of the hills on the Sylhet border. The finest oranges in India are also grown in groves in the same tract, the value of the trade in which is now (1876) estimated to amount
237 to £3760 per annum. Lac is gathered by the Mikírs in the Jáintiá
439 Hills, but not to any great extent. Bees are both domesticated
231 and found wild, and an extensive trade in bees-wax is carried on, the amount exported being estimated at from three hundred to four
233 hundred *maunds* annually. The whole of the Hills, where there is
• 621 no forest, and where the land is not under cultivation, consists of
651 rich pasture grounds, which are held in common by the villagers and pay no revenue to Government.

137 The forests of the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills do not yield much profit either to the British Government or to the chiefs. There
[648] are no reserved forests in the District; and according to the Deputy-
[659] Conservator, the total area of unreserved forest, *i.e.* of land covered with timber trees and not at present required for *júm* cultivation, is only 150 square miles. The trees found are chiefly pine, and those classified as 'mixed upper hill forests.' At an elevation of 3000 feet, the Pinus Kasia predominates over all other vegetation and forms almost pure pine forests. It is found also at lower heights, and there attains larger dimensions, but only in the case of isolated trees. The 'mixed upper hill forests' are confined to a series of sacred groves, which clothe the topmost ridge of the watershed between the valleys of the Brahmaputra and Surmá. The characteristic trees are those of a temperate vegetation, chiefly consisting of oaks, chestnuts, magnolia, Schima, Cinnamomum, Prunus, Engelhardtia, etc. There are also numerous other timber trees, including the valuable *sál* (Shorea robusta) and the rubber tree (Ficus elastica); but on the whole the Khásí Hills are remarkable for the
[648] absence of forest. Early in 1874-75 measures were taken to put a
[659] stop to the indiscriminate burning of the forests, and the Siems and village officers were made responsible for the conservancy of the sacred groves. These endeavours have met with some success; but it is a very difficult thing to change the habits of a population, or to induce uncivilised tribes to incur a small temporary inconvenience for the sake of future benefit. The total area directly protected from fire during the year 1875-76 is returned at 3618 acres; the expenditure was Rs. 122; and in ten prosecutions for breaches of forest rules, twenty-three persons were convicted.

21: Ehrenfels E-4,5 (1950) 1953 AR7 Khasi AR7



question and indeed has been compiled without knowledge of Professor CHATTOPADHYAY's work, and before he very kindly sent a private copy of this work, which had not been available to me previously.

The present paper offers data on the following subjects:

1. Khasi kinship terms from the Mawshai Khasi plateau-area in the Khyrim State, about 20 to 30 miles south-east of Shillong, which are in some minor details different from the Mawphlang data, collected by CHATTOPADHYAY, south-west of Shillong;
2. Comparative data from the Wâr-Khasi;
3. from the plateau-area of Jowai in the Jaintia [10] Hills, and
4. from the Wâr-Jaintia;
5. Aspects of the Khasi kinship terms, with special reference to the matrilineal order of society, and to the respective position of women and men there, especially the particular consideration which the biological relationship through the father receives in kinship terminology, in spite of the emphasis on the matrilineal structure in Khasi society (comp. term No. 1 of the list and its discussion in para 3/b of the present paper, on p. 409).

The data were collected in field researches to which I was enabled by two Research Grants for comparative studies in matrilineal civilizations of India, given by the Viking Fund Inc. (now: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research) in New York, during the periods 1949-50 and 1951-52. My gratefulness to the foundation for enabling me to carry out these field researches, as well as to the University of Madras, for granting me Sabbathical leaves for the same purpose, is here once more recorded.

My research programme was based on the first tentative working hypothesis, laid down in my book "Mother-right in India" [11], but includes also various other aspects of study which have not been pre-planned, or even considered there [12], as for instance also the present comparative study of kinship terms in areas of four Khasi dialects and their special significance to the Khasi matrilineal social system. The material was collected during a five weeks house-to-house study in the recently founded Plateau Khasi village Maw Syn Jri, during April and May 1950. This village consisted mostly of houses, owned by Khasi elder sisters and inhabited by them, with their families, after they had left the ancestral home in the main village Kharang, about one mile across the valley on the western side of the new settlement. The ancestral family houses there were in the possession of either the mother, or, if she was no more alive, the youngest daughter of the family, the *ka khun khaddu* [13].

[10] Jaintia, (*Pnâr* or "Synteng") are the Khasi speaking eastern neighbours of the Khasi proper. As among the Khasi, so also among Jaintia the people in the cool plateau highlands are in many ways different from those who settled in the luscious tropical rainforests of the southern slopes, now situated just north of the East Pakistan frontier: — the so-called Wâr-country, where economy is mainly based on pan-leaf gardening.

[11] EHRENFELS (1941).

[12] EHRENFELS (1950/A), (1950/B), (1950/C), (1950/D), (1950/E), (1951/A), (1951/B).

[13] GEDDES (1914), pp. 83, seq., CAMPION (1936), p. 11.